

Performance Governance Arrangements 2025/26

1. BACKGROUND

Legislative Context for the Performance Improvement Duty

Under Part 12 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council has a statutory duty to set objectives for the improvement of services, whilst ensuring the necessary arrangements exist to support and secure their realisation. In addition, targets for planning, job creation and waste management are set by Central Government.

Performance Improvement under the Local Government Act 2014

Part 12 of the Act details the framework to support continuous improvement in the delivery of services, in the context of strategic objectives and issues that are important to those who receive the services. The Council is required to gather information to assess improvements in services and to issue a report annually on performance against self-imposed and statutory indicators.

The General Duty of Improvement

Under section 84 of the Act, the Council is under a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.

What is Improvement?

'Improvement' in the context of the Act means more than just quantifiable gains in service output or efficiency, or the internal effectiveness of an organisation. Improvement for the Council should mean activity that enhances the sustainable quality of life and environment for ratepayers and communities.

Firstly, the duty involves 'making arrangements' to improve, and the Council should put in place arrangements which allow the effective understanding of local needs and priorities, and to make best use of resources and capacity to meet them and to evaluate the impact of actions.

Secondly, the duty refers to 'continuous improvement'. The Council should seek continuously to ensure that improvement objectives remain relevant, that the best arrangements for delivering them are in place, and that Council is able to understand and demonstrate the impact on the outcomes for citizens.

The Council defines improvement, and more specifically continuous improvement, as about growing and developing capabilities, behaviours and practices in line with the achievement of corporate objectives. It is about achieving improved outputs and outcomes that are of benefit to our stakeholders.

Improvement objectives

Section 85 requires the Council, for each financial year, to set improvement objectives for improving the exercise of its functions and to have in place arrangements to achieve those objectives.

The Council must frame each improvement objective so as to bring about improvement in at least one of the specified aspects of improvement as defined in section 86 of the Act:

Strategic Effectiveness; Service Quality; Service Availability; Fairness; Sustainability; Efficiency and Innovation.

Thus, it follows that for the Council to successfully discharge its general improvement duty, it should incorporate the seven aspects of improvement into its decision-making processes and its assessments of functions and services. This would also extend to governance or scrutiny functions.

2. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan in the context of performance legislation

The Council continues to have high ambitions for our residents. We are committed to ensuring that the Borough continues to develop, improve, grow and be a place where people choose to invest, learn, work, visit and live in.

To this end the Council has updated their Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 which sets out our steadfast commitments to the wellbeing of our residents, protecting our environment and the seamless delivery of services, focusing on public safety, maintaining service standards, and maximising opportunities for community capacity building and investment in the regeneration of our towns and villages. The Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 will support the revival of the local economy, working with partners and stakeholders to build an inclusive, green, digital future.

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 updates citizens on performance progress, and outlines improvements in Council's services. In the pursuit of delivering exceptional services to our residents and enhancing their quality of life we have identified six Guiding Principles on which to focus to provide improvement.

- Improve the Health & Wellbeing of our Residents
- Protect our Planet's Environment
- Provide the Best-in-Class Customer Service Experience
- Improve our Employee Experience
- Encourage Economic Growth within the Borough
- Maintain our Financial Sustainability and ensure we are a Trusted Organisation

Performance will continue to be monitored for all Council services and be reported to Committees and Council during 2025/26.

Delivering Continuous Improvement and Managing Performance

The Council has put in place arrangements to support performance management and improvement which will drive and provide assurance that we are delivering on our vision, shared outcomes and objectives.

The Strategic Performance Framework diagram (Figure 1) illustrates the hierarchy of our Corporate Plans, which are central to the achievement of our vision and mission statements and illustrates the alignment of the internal/external factors and processes in terms of performance management.

Strategic Performance Framework



Figure 1

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025/26

CONSULTATION PROCESS AND REPORTING TIMETABLE

January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 (Draft for Consultation) reported to Policy & Governance Committee ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 (Draft for Consultation) reported to Council
February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 (Draft for Consultation) 12-week public consultation begins ➤ Strike The Rate ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 quarter 3 progress report to CLT
March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 quarter 3 progress report to relevant Committees, and Policy & Governance ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 quarter 3 progress report to Audit & Risk Committees ➤ Northern Ireland Audit Office final Section 95 report published on NIAO website
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 (Draft for Consultation) 12-week public consultation ends
May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 (Draft for Consultation) 12-week public consultation responses collated in a summary report to CLT. ➤ Customer and resident survey in Borough Life magazine & online ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2023-24 quarter 4 progress report to CLT ➤ Directorate Business Plans 2024/25 bi-annual Performance Report to CLT
June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Quarter 4 Progress Report to Relevant Committees ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Quarter 4 Progress Report to Audit and Risk Committee ➤ Directorate Business Plans 2024/25 Performance Report to Relevant Committees ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 (draft for consultation) 12-week public consultation, responses collated in a summary report to Policy & Governance Committee.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 (final draft) and Executive Summary to Audit and Risk Committee and Council and Council and published on Council corporate website by 30 June ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26, Performance Governance Arrangements to Policy & Governance Committee and Audit & Risk Committee
July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Northern Ireland Audit Office Performance Improvement Assessment for 2025/26 fieldwork
August 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annual Report on Performance 2024/25 Self-Assessment report to CLT ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 1 Progress Report to CLT ➤ Directorate Business Plans 2025/26 Quarter 1 Performance Report to CLT
September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 1 Progress Report to relevant Committees. ➤ Annual report on performance 2024/25 Self-Assessment to Policy and Governance Committee, Audit & Risk Committee and Council before published on Council website by 30 September ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 1 Progress Report to Audit & Risk Committee. ➤ Northern Ireland Audit Office Performance Improvement Assessment Tool to be returned by 1 October
November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 2 Progress Report to CLT ➤ Directorate Business Plans 2025/26 Quarter 2 Performance Report to CLT ➤ Northern Ireland Audit Office Performance Improvement Assessment for 2024/25 Section 95 report published and reported to CLT with draft action plan ➤ Customer and resident survey in Borough Life magazine & online
December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 2 Progress Report to relevant Committees, Audit and Risk Committee ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 2 Progress Report to, Audit and Risk Committee ➤ Directorate Business Plans 2025/26 Quarter 2 Performance Report to relevant Committees ➤ Northern Ireland Audit Office Performance Improvement Assessment Report 2025/26 to Audit and Risk Committee with draft Action Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 (Draft for Consultation) report to CLT
January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2026/27 (Draft for Consultation) report to Policy and Governance Committee and Council ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2026/27 (Draft for Consultation) report to Council ➤ Corporate Workshop (Mid-year report on performance; corporate financial review; draft estimates for 2026/27)
February 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2026/27 (Draft for Consultation) 12-week public consultation begins ➤ Strike the Rate ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 3 Progress Report to CLT ➤ Directorate Business Plans 2025/26 Quarter 3 Performance Report to CLT
March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 3 Progress Report to relevant Committees ➤ Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2025/26 Quarter 3 Progress Report to Audit & Risk Committee ➤ Northern Ireland Audit Office final Section 95 report published on NIAO website
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- Corporate Performance & Improvement Plan 2026/27 (final draft) and Executive Summary to Council and published on the corporate website by 30 June

3. PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK & REPORTING

The Council's Vision was approved at June Council 2024, is set out in our Corporate Plan and remains our guiding principle. To be, "An ambitious Council, working towards a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable Borough."

To realise this Vision, the Council recognises it must work in collaboration with others, particularly our Community Planning partners under the framework of our 'Love Living Here' Community Plan.

In addition, our Local Development Plan will provide a spatial framework to support the economic growth and social needs of our Borough.

This Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 will sit alongside these Plans to assist us to work towards the goals and ambitions we have already committed to and fulfils our statutory performance duty.

The Corporate Leadership Team, working with Elected Members, identified and developed, and publicly consulted upon, a range of objectives within the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 which were framed within the four themes of the Corporate Plan and to reflect the outcomes of the Community Plan. Citizens will be consulted in terms of the updates to the Plan.

These objectives have been aligned to the seven aspects of improvement which are identified within the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 Section 84.

Additional statutory performance targets, for Planning, Economic Development as well as Waste and Recycling, which are set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015, are also monitored.

See Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 [here](#).

A Performance Framework has been developed for to ensure that the commissioning, delivery, problem solving and monitoring of identified objectives are achieved. Elected Members are a key part of this governance framework.

Reporting Arrangements

Formal reporting arrangements are in place to ensure the effective delivery of the Performance and Improvement Plan. Progress is monitored and reported on a quarterly basis to the Council/Committees and the Corporate Leadership Team.

An annual self-assessment of performance report for each financial year is published on the Council's corporate website by 30 September of each year.

In addition, the Council commissions an internal audit annually to undertake a review of different aspects of performance improvement which reports to the Audit & Risk Committee.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office reviews the processes and arrangements as part of the annual Performance Improvement Audit, which will assess compliance with legislative obligations within the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, which also requires the Local Government Auditor to publicly publish their assessment annually.

Individual roles and responsibilities are as follows:

Council & Committees

The Council provides overall approval for the Performance and Improvement Plan. Reports are forwarded on a quarterly basis for monitoring the progress of delivery of the Council's performance. Both Council and Committees provide a crucial role in terms of promoting innovation by challenging the status quo and encouraging different ways of thinking and options for delivery.

Policy & Governance Committee

The Policy & Governance Committee subjects objectives, targets, indicators and performance to appropriate scrutiny, challenge and evaluation. It further reviews progress reports of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 on a quarterly basis, providing scrutiny and challenge to results, as well as ensuring that evaluations are carried out and assessments of performance. Performance is reviewed using a range of quantitative and qualitative measures, and where possible comparing to appropriate benchmarks.

Audit & Risk Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee is responsible for reviewing the adequacy and suitability of the arrangements in place to secure continuous improvement of Council functions, providing assurance that such arrangements are operating effectively. It also considers the quarterly progress updates on the achievement of the Corporate Performance Improvement Objectives, using a range of qualitative and quantitative measures, and where possible comparing appropriate benchmarks.

Community Planning

The Council has established a Community Planning Partnership and 'Support' Partners have also been appointed. The Community Planning Partnership is complemented by 4 x Outcome Delivery Groups:

- People
- Place
- Prosperity
- Planet

The Community Planning Partnership meets on a bi-annual basis, with minutes noted at the Community Development Committee.

To support the delivery of the Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26, Elected Members and officers have roles within seven District Elected Member Engagement Groups. Meetings are held three times annually.

The Community Planning Partnership associated Outcome Delivery Groups and DEA Engagement Groups are embedded in Council's Performance and Improvement Plan.

Corporate Leadership Team

The Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) oversee delivery of the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26, whilst quality assuring any proposals and resolving corporate issues as they arise. CLT report progress to Council/Committee and seek policy direction as required. Directors act as DEA Leads and have strategic influence throughout the organisation to ensure that the officers involved in the delivery of the recovery objectives obtain the necessary resources – HR, Finance & IT etc.) to ensure ultimate success.

Project Managers and Project Officers

A formal reporting structure has been developed and approved for project managers and officers delivering against the Performance and Improvement Plan to report progress.

Performance Improvement Team

The Performance Improvement team provide support for the performance management system and the recording, measurement and reporting of the results of the Performance and Improvement Plan.

Benchmarking

The Council is an active member of the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), which works with over 300 councils throughout the UK to promote public sector excellence. This includes participation in the Performance Network, enabling the Council to compare our performance across a wide range of services and activities.

Council officers will continue to work with the Local Government Performance Working Group, Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Audit Office to progress a benchmarking approach.

In addition to this, Council officers, benchmark and review best practice as part of the continuous improvement process.

4. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES 2025/26

2025/26 Performance Improvement Objectives	Associated Statutory Aspects of Improvement	Associated Community Plan Framework Outcome	Associated Corporate Plan 2024-2030 Theme & Objective
<p>Objective 1: We will support the health & wellbeing of our residents through the increasing use of Council facilities, visits to our parks, culture and heritage sites, and availing of Council support and wellbeing programmes and initiatives.</p>	<p>Strategic Effectiveness; Service Quality; Service Availability; Fairness; Sustainability; Innovation and Efficiency</p>	<p><i>"Our citizens enjoy good health and well-being."</i></p>	<p>Our People, Our Planet, Our Place Working in partnerships to plan and deliver better services, address disadvantage and improve the quality of life for everyone. The facilities and support we provide will lead to a more active, healthy and sustainable community.</p>
<p>Why has this objective been chosen?</p>			
<p>We strive to be an area where people choose to locate and where residents enjoy a high quality of life. Through our leisure and community provisions and other commitments we will continue to support initiatives to improve the health & wellbeing of our citizens. We are committed to working in partnership with all key stakeholders to plan and deliver better services, address disadvantages and improve the quality of life for everyone.</p>			
<p>What will we do?</p>		<p>We will have succeeded in 2025/26 if:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a single unit responsible for the administration and management of Grant Funding • Work in partnership with Community Advice services to ensure wraparound support for residents 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £870K grant funding is supported through Community Development Grant Aid • We attract 575,000 visitors to our arts, culture and heritage sites and 650,000 to our parks and open spaces 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage participation in arts, culture and heritage events• Promote our Community Centres and hubs for community groups and events• Measure the number of visitors to our award-winning parks and open spaces• Maintain the number of visits to our leisure centres• Implement and programme of initiatives that help to support our residents Health & Wellbeing• Ensure compliance with Environmental Health regulations• Continue to improve the way we interact with our customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will maintain the numbers of people with MORE Leisure memberships at 14,500• 85% compliance with statutory Environmental Health regulations• 80% Customer and Resident satisfaction with Wellbeing initiatives across the Borough
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2025/26 Performance Improvement Objectives	Associated Statutory Aspects of Improvement	Associated Community Plan Framework Outcome	Associated Corporate Plan 2024-2030 Theme & Objective
<p>Objective 2: We will protect and improve our planet’s environment, through reducing the impact of our activities to make Antrim and Newtownabbey a sustainable, and climate-adapted Borough. This includes promoting renewable energy, improving waste management, encouraging sustainable transportation and fostering community awareness and engagement in environmental conservation efforts.</p>	<p>Strategic Effectiveness; Sustainability; Efficiency and Innovation</p>	<p><i>“Our citizens live in safe, clean and vibrant places.”</i></p>	<p>Our Planet, Our Place</p> <p>We will work towards being environmentally sustainable and reducing the impact of the Council services by improving our environmental performance and reducing our carbon footprint.</p> <p>We will maximise the tourism potential of the Borough by developing attractive and sustainable destinations and experiences.</p> <p>Operate a proactive and efficient planning service that promotes positive sustainable development and growth.</p>
<p>Why has this objective been chosen?</p>			
<p>We recognise that our activities and services can have positive and negative impacts upon the environment, and that we need to manage them to improve our performance and manage risk. We are committed to protecting the environment by minimising any adverse environmental impact, while creating opportunities for enhancing positive environmental effects to improve the quality of life for people. We have established an all-party Sustainability Working Group which will steer the development of our Sustainability Action Plan. Our Action Plan reflects the UN Sustainability Development Goals we can influence both directly and indirectly. We aim to inspire others by continuously improving the environmental performance of our operations, and continue to promote to reduce, reuse and recycle to create a healthier more sustainable community for current and future generations.</p>			

What will we do?	We will have succeeded in 2025/26 if:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a full review of energy usage across operations • Reducing waste and minimising water and energy demand across its building and services • Encouraging the use of renewable and low carbon energy • Protect and enhance our environments, conserving and restoring them and the biodiversity they contain • Continue to invest in education and awareness programmes promoting responsible behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce total annual energy consumption in Council by 2%. • 62.5% of household waste is set for recycling (Statutory Target) • Reduce the total annual water consumption by >2% • 2.5% reduction in the amount of carbon emissions from the Council operational fleet • We have a 1% reduction in the Council's Carbon Footprint • We establish the percentage of Council parks and open spaces assigned for biodiversity projects

2025/26 Performance Improvement Objectives	Associated Statutory Aspects of Improvement	Associated Community Plan Framework Outcome	Associated Corporate Plan 2024-2030 Theme & Objective
<p>Objective 3: We will provide best-in-class services for our residents and make them feel valued and engaged. By fostering trust, engagement and increased satisfaction, we are committed to elevating the customer service experience.</p>	<p>Strategic Effectiveness; Service Quality; Service Availability Fairness Efficiency and Innovation</p>	<p><i>"Our citizens live in a safe, connected and vibrant place."</i></p>	<p>Our People "We deliver high quality Council services and improve access for people, communities and businesses in the Borough." Promote the Customer voice by engaging with citizens, to achieve excellence in customer and service quality standards."</p>
<p>Why has this objective been chosen?</p>			
<p>The Council continues to put our customers at the heart of our service delivery, which is why we have kept high customer satisfaction as an Improvement Objective. We continue to promote and improve live chat functionality and customer hubs, in addition to expanding the number of services available through our digital platform.</p> <p>We want to better understand the needs of our customers and utilise the development of a customer engagement framework to promote the customer voice by engaging with our citizens, to achieve excellence in customer and service quality standards. We will use several different data sources to build a rich picture of our customers and use this information to tailor our services.</p>			
<p>What will we do?</p>		<p>We will have succeeded in 2025/26 if:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to communicate with our citizens through Borough Life, Website, Residents App and Live Chat. • We will regularly seek on feedback from residents, visitors and local businesses through a programme of consultations and engagement. • We will make customer interactions seamless, responsive and positive. • We will reduce the number of abandoned calls. • We will promote and improve our live chat functionality. • We will implement a customer engagement framework. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We achieve at least 80% satisfaction with overall Council services. • The percentage of abandoned calls will be 6.5% or less. • The percentage of abandoned Live Chats will be 8% or less • We have increased the number of consultations and responses. 	

2025/26 Performance Improvement Objectives	Associated Statutory Aspects of Improvement	Associated Community Plan Framework Outcome	Associated Corporate Plan 2024-2030 Objective
<p>Objective 4: We will attract and retain talent, foster dynamic leadership, promote development, diversity and inclusion and ensure the wellbeing of our colleagues. Our goal is to drive innovation and excellence in service delivery and strive to be a great place to work.</p>	<p>Strategic Effectiveness; Service Quality; Service Availability and Efficiency</p>	<p><i>"Our citizens enjoy good health and well-being."</i></p>	<p>Our People, Our Performance, Our Profile</p> <p>"To be recognised for dynamic leadership and excellence locally, nationally and internationally."</p> <p>"We will continue to build a resilient organisation culture by adopting best practice health, safety and wellbeing practices."</p>
<p>Why has this objective been chosen?</p>			
<p>The Council recognises that investing in employee wellbeing can lead to better employee engagement, reduced sickness and higher performance. This is why we are keeping staff attendance as an improvement objective. We will continue to enhance the employee experience and strengthen our employee value proposition. This is why we aim to improve employee satisfaction, retention and reduce absence. We will continue to deliver a comprehensive wellbeing programme and work collaboratively to manage attendance closely, review relevant procedures and improve service delivery.</p>			
<p>What will we do?</p>		<p>We will have succeeded in 2025/26 if:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance our employee experience and strengthen our employee value proposition. • Report and review performance and proactively respond to emerging needs. • Develop innovative leadership programmes to support succession planning and development of our people. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will reduce the average number of days lost per employee below the 2024/25 level of 14.31 days to 14 days. • At least 55% of employees have full (100%) attendance. • 80% of employees report a positive employee experience. 	

2025/26 Performance Improvement Objectives	Associated Statutory Aspects of Improvement	Associated Community Plan Framework Outcome	Associated Corporate Plan 2024-2030 Theme & Objective
<p>Objective 5: We will grow the local economy by supporting development of existing businesses securing new investment, creating jobs, providing training and upskilling people into work.</p>	<p>Strategic Effectiveness; Service Quality and Efficiency</p>	<p><i>"Our citizens benefit from economic prosperity."</i></p>	<p>Our Prosperity, Our Performance</p> <p>"We will nurture our entrepreneurial base, creating an environment for new and existing businesses to succeed, providing upskilling opportunities and increasing employment."</p> <p>"We will continue to deliver regulatory services and implement efficient processes and improvement programmes across Council services."</p>
<p>Why has this objective been chosen?</p>			
<p>We are an ambitious Council and want to take advantage of all opportunities to encourage people to live, work and invest in the Borough.</p> <p>We have a Borough of real opportunity and have much to offer investors and businesses. We will work collaboratively with all stakeholders to maximise the economic prosperity in the Borough.</p>			
<p>What will we do?</p>		<p>We will have succeeded in 2025/26 if:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurture our entrepreneurial base, creating an environment for new and existing businesses to succeed, providing upskilling opportunities, increasing employment. • Through responsive and efficient Planning and Economic Development support, we will attract investment, support business growth, and be a centre of excellence for global companies. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 existing businesses are assisted to develop / expand their operations through business support programmes. • 150 people are assisted in to work through local market partnership and related activity • 50 new jobs are created through the Council investment promotion fund 	

- We will continue to review and improve our internal processes, whilst delivering regular training to staff.

- 500 businesses have availed of / engaged with / been supported through the Council's suite of programmes and events

2025/26 Performance Improvement Objectives	Associated Statutory Aspects of Improvement	Associated Community Plan Framework Outcome	Associated Corporate Plan 2024-2030 Theme & Objective
<p>Objective 6: We will embed transparent, robust and best practice governance arrangements to maintain the financial sustainability of the Council, to protect the services we provide, and to ensure compliance with all our obligations both regulatory and legislative and increasing the speed with which we pay suppliers.</p>	<p>Strategic Effectiveness; Service Quality; Service Availability; and Efficiency</p>	<p><i>“Our citizens live in connected, safe clean and vibrant places”</i></p>	<p>Our Performance, Our Profile</p> <p>“We will be at the forefront of good governance, optimise the resources available to us and ensure financial sustainability.”</p> <p>“Continue to deliver regulatory services and implement efficient processes and improvement programmes across Council services”</p>
<p>Why has this objective been chosen?</p>			
<p>We want to ensure that as a Council we are financially sustainable and deliver value for money. We will review and refine our services to ensure that they are being delivered in an efficient and effective manner. We have a responsibility to apply good governance and to use our statutory powers of environmental health, planning and building control to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of those living and working in the Borough.</p> <p>The Council needs to ensure there are robust and regulatory arrangements in place to support performance management and improvement which drive and provide assurance that we are delivering on our vision, shared outcomes and improvement objectives.</p> <p>As a key procurer of goods and services in the Borough, the Council is aware of the importance of cash flow to businesses, particularly small businesses, and will continue to review its processes to ensure that suppliers receive payments quickly</p> <p>Improving our systems and processes to ensure the Council is consistently meeting its quarterly target is important to the Council and businesses in the Borough.</p>			

What will we do?	We will have succeeded in 2025/26 if:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the financial health of the Council • Ensure our finances are managed in accordance with the requirements of all relevant legislation • Provide full assurance and good governance through the continued pursuit of internal and external assessment and audit arrangements • Continue to adopt a Councillor led strategic approach to Elected Member development and wellbeing • Monitor and publish our payment timescales ensuring we strive for excellence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We maintain the Council's general reserves as per policy • The annual Governance Statement is reported • We achieve the Certificate of Compliance from the Northern Ireland Audit Office under Section 95 of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) 2014 Act • We receive NIAO certificate concluding that the financial statements have been prepared according to LG (Accounts & Audit) Regulation (NI) 2015 and the Department for Communities directions • We maintain the Charter Plus Award for Elected Member Development • 95% of Freedom of Information Requests responded to within agreed timescales • 80% of invoices are paid within 10 working days • 90% of invoices are paid within 30 calendar days

5. STATUTORY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

A set of seven performance measures are in place for Local Government through the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015.

These relate to three distinct services within the Council, as set out below.

Waste and Recycling

W1: The percentage of municipal waste collected by Councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for reuse)

Household waste is as defined in Article 2 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997(a) and the Controlled Waste and Duty of Care Regulations (NI) 2013(b).

W2: The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled

W3: The amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings

Local Authority collected municipal waste arisings is the total amount of local authority collected municipal waste which has been collected by a district Council.

Statutory indicators have been set by the former Department of the Environment for Waste Management Functions of Councils to ensure consistency and reliability of data and to facilitate accurate comparison between Councils. This is aimed at providing Ministerial and public assurance over the performance of the local authority collected waste management system.

Central reporting also ensures that the Department (now DAERA) continues to meet its statutory obligations under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics when reporting at a regional level.

Each of the 11 Councils has access to a web-based system for local authority collected municipal waste reporting known as Waste Data Flow (WDF). This facilitates reporting from local government to central government and data is based on returns made to WDF by Councils, within two months of the end of each quarter.

Quarterly data reports are provisional and may change when all returns have undergone validation. The fully validated figures that are published in the annual report have undergone audit by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and further validation by Statistics and Analytical Services Branch (SASB).

Targets for household recycling, have been superseded by the Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland). There will be an interim target of 55% for the recycling of municipal waste by 2025, which will increase by 2035 to 65%

Performance against Waste and Recycling targets, and the standards to be achieved for 2025/26 are:

Indicator	2023/24	2024/25 Target	2024/25 YTD	2025/26 Target
% of household waste collected that is sent for recycling (Statutory target 55%)	62.2%	60%	60.83 %	60%
The amount (tonnage) collected municipal waste arising (Statutory target)*	106,040 tonnes	107,000 tonnes	84,609 tonnes end of Q3	107,000 tonnes
The amount (tonnage) of biodegradable municipal waste that is landfilled (Statutory Target)	11,467 tonnes	16,788 tonnes	To be reported in November 2025	TBC

* There is no statutory target for the amount of collected municipal waste.

Economic Development

ED1: The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity

Business start-up activity means the delivery of completed client led business Plans under the Department for the Economy and additional supports, available through the Enterprise Support Service, now branded as Go Succeed Northern Ireland.

Business start-up activity means the delivery of completed client led business Plans under the Department for the Economy and the Regional Start Initiative (or its successor programmes).

The Council's Economic Development Service is responsible for managing the Business Start-Up Programme for the Borough alongside other economic development and tourism programmes and initiatives. The Business Start-Up Programme, only one part of the Council's economic development service, transferred to Local Government on 1 April 2015 from the former Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and the statutory indicator was introduced by regional government to ensure that the function is carried out in a clear, fair and consistent manner and that best practice is applied across the 11 Councils.

Performance against the Economic Development target, and the standard to be achieved for 2025/26 are:

Indicator	2023/24	2024/25 Target	2024/25	2025/26 Target
Number of jobs promoted through start up activity via the Go Succeed Programme Go Succeed Target 87	55	87	145	87

Planning

P1: The average processing time of major planning applications

An application in the category of major development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015(a).

P2: The average processing time of local planning applications

Local applications mean an application in the category of local development within the meaning of the Planning (Development Management) Regulations (NI) 2015, and any other applications for approval or consent under the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (or any orders or regulations made under that Act).

P3: The percentage of enforcement cases processed within 39 weeks

Enforcement cases are investigations into alleged breaches of planning control under Part 5 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (or any orders or regulations made under that Act).

The Council's Planning Service is responsible for:

- Receiving and making decisions on the majority of planning applications;
- Enforcing breaches of planning permission;
- Making tree preservation orders;
- Protecting and preserving built heritage; and
- Producing a Local Development Plan outlining how land should be used and developed in the future.

The Planning function transferred to local government from the former Department of the Environment on 1 April 2015 and the statutory indicators were introduced at that time to ensure that the planning functions were carried out in a clear, fair and consistent manner.

Quarterly reports are produced by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) based on information available through the Planning Portal, i.e. a regional website where you can track all planning applications. Every application received, across all 11 Councils and by the DfI (i.e. regionally significant applications), is entered onto the Planning Portal.

The quarterly statistical reports are compiled by DfI and provided to each of the Councils. The reports are also available through the DfI website.

Council Planning Officers also have the ability to produce management reports from the Planning Portal to monitor application processing.

Performance against Planning targets, and the standards to be achieved for 2025/26 are:

Indicator	2023/24	2024/25 Target	2024/25	2025/26 Target
MAJOR - % processing times for major planning applications processed within the 30 week target (CIP – Statutory Target)	70%	>50%	70.6%	>50%
MAJOR - Average processing times in weeks for major planning applications processed within the 30 week target (CIP – Statutory Target)	21.1 weeks	<30 weeks	21.8 weeks	<30 weeks
LOCAL - % processing times for local planning applications within the 15 week target (CIP – Statutory Target)	61.5%	>50%	60.8%	>50%
LOCAL - Average processing times in weeks for local planning applications within the 15 week target (CIP – Statutory Target)	13 weeks	<15 weeks	12.8 weeks	<15 weeks
ENFORCEMENT - % processing times for enforcement planning cases within the 39 week target (CIP – Statutory Target)	95.9%	>70%	97.3%	>70%
ENFORCEMENT - Average processing times in weeks for enforcement planning cases within the 39 week target (CIP – Statutory Target)	12.6%	<39 weeks	10.7 Weeks	<39 weeks

6. CONSULTATION To allow for feedback on the Plan a twelve-week consultation opened on Monday 3 February and closed on at 5:00 pm on Monday 28 April. Multiple channels were used for consultation to ensure robust feedback on the Plan:

- Copies of the draft Plan along with the consultation document were available in the reception area on Mossley Mill and Antrim Civic Centre.
- The draft Plan, Executive Summary and consultation document were available on the Council's website and a QR code was created linked to the consultation survey.
- Face to face consultation events were held in Leisure Centres, Community Centres, Libraries, Civic Centres and PCSP events across the Borough.
- A consultation event was held with the Youth Voice in Antrim Civic Centre.
- Weekly digital surveys were conducted via the Council's social media channels.
- 13,241 stakeholders were contacted directly requesting feedback on the Plan.

As a result of these **148** completed consultation surveys and **527** digital responses were received.

Members were provided with a summary of the consultation responses. The feedback from the consultation will be considered for incorporation into the implementation plans to ensure the Borough continues to develop, improve, grow and be a place where people choose to invest, learn, work, visit and live in.

Continuous Feedback

The Council is committed to improving our services and an important part of that is listening to the residents, businesses and visitors to our Borough.

The Council have a number of systems and processes in place to capture this feedback and integrate it into continuous improvement processes.

Accessibility

To comply with legislation, the Corporate Performance and Improvement Plan 2025/26 is available in a number of alternative formats on request and is published on the Council's website in an executive summary format.